

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 EB-03 /040 R

#RAFTED BY AF/C:MFGALLAGHER:OSM

APPROVED BY AF/C:RRSTRAND

EUR/NE:MRS. SHIRLEY

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R 082327Z AUG 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 188339

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CG, US, BE

SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS WITH BELGIAN MINISTER CAHEN

REF: STATE 187088

1. SUMMARY: IN THE COURSE OF MEETING TO DISCUSS ZAIRE'S FINANCIAL PROBLEM (SEE REFTEL), BELGIAN MINISTER CAHEN ALSO REPORTED BISENGIMANA'S COMMENTS ON COUP CHARGES AND SPECULATED ABOUT WHO MIGHT BE THE NEXT BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE.

2. CAHEN SAID THAT ON JULY 21 BISENGIMANA HAD CALLED HIM FROM PARIS. AMONG OTHER TOPICS THEY HAD DISCUSSED WAS THE ABORTIVE COUP AND CHARGES OF US INVOLVEMENT. BISENGIMANA HAD SAID IT WAS CLEAR NOW THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO OFFICIAL US INVOLVEMENT, BUT THAT A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO CERTAIN INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS (UNNAMED) HAD STARTED THE BALL ROLLING ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE AND
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HAD THEN LEFT ZAIRE. CAHEN SAID HE HAD TOLD BISENGIMANA

THAT HE WAS SURE USG HAD BEEN AS SURPRISED AS HE (CAHEN) AT THE CHARGES AND THAT THE US HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY WAY. BISENGIMANA HAD SAID THAT HE NOW KNEW THAT TOO.

3. ON THE SUBJECT OF THE NEXT BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE, CAHEN SAID THAT THE BELGIAN PRESS HAD BEEN MENTIONING HIS NAME, BUT THAT HE THOUGHT HIS OWN CHANCES WERE NOT GOOD: HE WAS A BIT YOUNG FOR SUCH AN IMPORTANT POST (KINSHASA BEING ONE OF GOB'S 10 OR 12 CLASS ONE MISSIONS); HE HAD ONLY BEEN IN WASHINGTON FOR ELEVEN MONTHS; AND MOBUTU WANTED HIM TOO MUCH. (WHEN MINISTER OF COMMERCE TOUSSAINT VISITED KINSHASA FOR FIKIN, CAHEN SAID, MOBUTU ASKED TOUSSAINT, "WHEN WILL YOU SEND ME ALFRED?") CAHEN SAID HE THOUGHT ANOTHER CAREER AFRICANIST, RITTWEGE DE MOOR, WAS FIRST IN THE RUNNING. DEMOOR WAS CONGENERAL IN BUKAVU AT INDEPENDENCE, HAS BEEN AMBASSADOR TO TANZANIA AND KENYA, AND IS PRESENTLY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL IN BRUSSELS. SINCE DEMOOR IS OLDER AND HAS PREVIOUS AMBASSADORIAL EXPERIENCE, CAHEN FELT DEMOOR'S PROSPECTS LOOKED BRIGHTER THAN HIS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE, PRESS COMMENTS, PLOTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE188339
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750275-1007
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750868/aaaacibi.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 187088
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 APR 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <03 OCT 2003 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSIONS WITH BELGIAN MINISTER CAHEN
TAGS: PFOR, CG, US, BE, (CAHEN, ALFRED)
To: BRUSSELS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006